

**Comments on the proposed conservation of the specific names of *Holotropis herminieri* Duméril & Bibron, 1837 (currently *Lciocephalus herminieri*) and *Proctotretus bibronii* T. Bell, 1842 (currently *Liolaemus bibronii*) (Reptilia, Squamata)**

(Case 2976; see BZN 53: 112–115)

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1. It is my view that *Tropidolepis bellii* Gray, 1831 cannot be a synonym of *Proctotretus bibronii* Bell, 1842 (now *Liolaemus bibronii*); cf. para. 8 of the application. Gray's taxon was said to be 'metallic green'. Preserved and living individuals from the type locality of *L. bibronii* ('Port Desire' = Puerto Deseado, Santa Cruz Province, Argentina) and from throughout its range in the provinces of Chubut, Río Negro, Neuquén and Mendoza, are never green. Their color is always shades of tan and brown with cream-colored stripes (Cei, 1986). The length of *T. bellii* was said to be 10 inches (25.4 cm). The greatest total length (body + tail) of *L. bibronii* is 5.6 inches (14.2 cm). Additionally, *T. bellii* was said to have 'scales of the back ... strongly keeled, dagger pointed, the keels forming 14–16 ridges'. The number of rows of keeled dorsal scales in *L. bibronii* is 18–22.

2. The identity of *Tropidolepis bellii* Gray, 1831 cannot be determined with certainty. Relatively few species of *Liolaemus* have a color pattern that includes metallic green scales (Donoso-Barros, 1966). Of these, only *L. chiliensis* (Lesson, 1828) may attain a total length of 10 inches or more, i.e. 12.9 inches (32.7 cm) according to Hellmich (1934). Additionally, *L. chiliensis* is the only species with metallic green scales that has as few as 16 rows of keeled dorsal body scales (personal observation). Although it seems likely that *L. chiliensis* is a senior synonym of *Tropidolepis bellii* Gray, 1831, it would be best to consider the latter as a nomen dubium.

3. It is also my view that *Liolaemus bellii* Gray, 1845 (a species distinct from *Tropidolepis bellii* Gray, 1831) cannot be a synonym of *L. bibronii* (Bell, 1842); cf. para. 8 of the application. Although Boulenger (1885) listed *L. bellii* as a synonym of *bibronii*, it is likely to be a senior synonym of *Liolaemus altissimus altissimus* Müller & Hellmich, 1932 (p. 197), as suggested by Ortiz (1981) in an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, and subsequently accepted in print by Laurent (1983, 1984a, 1992), Vanzolini (1986) and Etheridge (1995). According to the type description, *Liolaemus bellii* has keeled temporal scales (smooth in *L. bibronii*), a black head with yellow dots (light brown with irregular dark brown spots, often with light temporal stripes, in *L. bibronii*), and scales edged with yellow (not present in *L. bibronii*). All of these characters are, however, consistent with those of *L. altissimus altissimus*. This taxon occurs in the high cordilleras of Santiago Province, Chile. There are further subspecies of *Liolaemus altissimus*, the combined range of which is the high cordilleras of Chile and Argentina from about 32° to 42° south.

4. Müller & Hellmich (1933, pp. 121–134) considered *Proctotretus modestus* Philippi, 1860, with a type locality of 'der Wüste und in den Gebirgen der Provinz Santiago', to be a senior synonym of *L. altissimus altissimus* Müller & Hellmich.

1932. They rejected the use of *modestus* Philippi, however, because they thought it was a junior secondary homonym of *Liolaemus* (*Sauridus*) *modestus* Tschudi, 1845. Subsequently Laurent (1984b, p. 367) pointed out that Tschudi's taxon is actually a species of *Stenocercus* Duméril & Bibron, 1837, a genus in the TROPIDURIDAE distantly related to *Liolaemus*.

5. As noted in para. 3 above, following the appearance in 1981 of Ortiz's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, the specific name of *Liolaemus bellii* Gray, 1845 has been adopted in place of *altissimus*. The validity of *L. bellii* has thus been established by acceptance of the synonymy of *L. bellii* and *L. altissimus* by authors subsequent to Ortiz, who have published the synonymy and who have adopted the earlier name. Nuñez & Jaksic (1992, p. 70), however, specifically rejected the use of *L. bellii* because Ortiz's thesis had not been published, an action also followed by Nuñez (1992). The rejection of *L. bellii* by these authors is a potential source of instability because it may be followed by others. It is therefore desirable that *L. bellii* Gray, 1845 be placed on the Official List as the name which is valid by both priority and majority usage, and this I now propose in addition to the proposals published in BZN 53: 114.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *bellii* Gray, 1845, as published in the binomen *Liolaemus bellii*.

#### Additional references

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Neither of us is an expert in the taxonomy of South American lizards; in the taxonomic placement of *Tropidolepis bellii* Gray, 1831 we were merely following literature allocation. Inasmuch as Dr Etheridge is an expert in the field, we would not contest his allocation of the name (his comment above).

Our involvement in the names pertaining to this case is a product of accounting for all the species-group names proposed in or applicable to the genus *Sceloporus* Wiegmann, 1828, a project that we have been working on for several years. A number of such names were at one time proposed in the nominal genus *Tropidolepis* Cuvier, 1829, hence our concern with these (para. 1 of the application). Their proper allocation had to be established.

With regard to *Liolaemus bellii* Gray, 1845, although stability of nomenclature in the sense of established usage cannot be viewed as at stake, in another sense stability is involved: the proper interpretation of the fact that Ortiz's dissertation was not published. Nuñez & Jaksic (1992) regarded Ortiz's synonymizing of *altissimus* with *bellii* as invalid because it was never published. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Etheridge above, several authors in several works have accepted Ortiz's conclusion. It would help nomenclatural stability considerably if the Commission would make it clear that a decision on the proper name for the species concerned cannot hinge on the failure of Ortiz's dissertation to be published; his conclusion was published subsequently by others. We support the placement of the specific name of *Liolaemus bellii* Gray, 1845 on the Official List.

**Comments on the proposed conservation of usage of 15 mammal specific names based on wild species which are antedated by or contemporary with those based on domestic animals**

(Case 3010; see BZN **53**: 28–37, 125, 192–200, 286–288)

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I support the proposal to conserve the 15 mammal specific names for wild species which are cited in this application. Stability in the nomenclature is a prerequisite of